

Macaulay does not appreciate the meaning of the naval operations he relates, or realise how much stronger the French navy was at the beginning of the war than that of England and Holland. For both these reasons he is unjust to Torrington, whom he condemns as an admiral as well as an administrator. He describes him as personally brave, but afraid of responsibility.¹ Nothing could be further from the truth. At Bantry Bay, on May 1, 1689, Torrington did not hesitate to engage Chateaurenault, though he had only nineteen men of war against the French commander's twenty-four. He was worsted but does not appear to have shown himself wanting either in skill or courage,²

Torrington's conduct next summer gave rise to a controversy famous in the history of naval strategy. He took command of the fleet in the Downs on May 30 ; it consisted of fifty Dutch and English men-of-war, but seven ships under Sir Cloudesly Shovell were cruising in the Irish Sea, and seventeen under Vice-Admiral Killigrew were on their way back from Cadiz. The French fleet under Tourville, consisting of about seventy men-of-war, sailed from Brest on June 13 and stationed itself off the Isle of Wight and between Torrington and the two detached squadrons* Torrington and his captains agreed that

the French fleet was too strong to be engaged with any prospect of success. His plan therefore was to endeavour to get past the French fleet to the westward, and join the

^JIV, iS₅7 -xv).

- A list of Torrington's fleet and a good account of the engagement ^{axe} given in Memoirs Relating to the Lord Torrington, pp. 37-8. A list of the French fleet is given in Calmon-Maison's *Le Marechal de CMteurenault* ^903} • PP- ^J 3^x9- The French lost 40 men killed and 93 wounded, the English 90 killed and 270 wounded. For comment, see Coiomb, ^{Naval} War-fare, p. 246, See also Hist. MSS. Coinm., Le Fleming MSS., pp. 240, 241.